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ABSTRACT

Noting that the study of composition has been less affected by postmodern theory than other humanities and social science disciplines, this book assesses the study and teaching of writing against the larger theoretical, political, and technological upheavals of the past 30 years. The book addresses the theoretical debate about the "self" the student writer is asked to occupy, the "modernist" goal of producing a rational, coherent student subject, and the writing instructor's unconscious imposition of elitist values and expectations in evaluating student work. The book also explores how networked computer technologies in writing classrooms are destabalizing texts and subjects, and asks what this loss of authority will mean for teachers of literacy. The book concludes by arguing that the electronically mediated culture has not brought an end to meaning, history, or subjectivity, but it does require thinking through the politics of location. Chapters in the book are: (1) In the Turbulence of Theory; (2) The Changing Political Landscape of Composition Studies; (3) The Linguistic Agent as Subject; (4) Ideologies of the Self in Writing Evaluation; (5) Coherent Contradictions: The Conflicting Rhetoric of Writing Textbooks; (6) The Achieved Utopia of the Networked Classroom; (7) Student Writers at the End of History? and (8) The Ethical Subject. (RS)

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